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ABSTRACT

Replicating a study conducted 10 years earlier in Colorado, a research project documented current gender perceptions of Wisconsin students and compared responses to those reported in the earlier study. The Wisconsin study included 3,363 students in grades 4, 6, 8, 10, and 12 in 26 schools who were asked the question, "If you woke up tomorrow and discovered you were the opposite sex, how do you think your life would be different?" Findings indicated that almost all girls and boys at all grade levels were satisfied with their gender. However, both girls and boys thought boys' lives were easier and more fun, whereas girls needed to be more reasonable and serious. From about the sixth grade on, there was no doubt that both boys and girls thought there was a difference in the quality of treatment by others and agreed that girls were not treated as well as boys. In the upper grades, girls said their parents would be more relaxed and not worry so much if they were boys. Surprisingly, few children mentioned differences in relationships with family members. There was almost no evidence that boys and girls agreed they were treated differently in the classroom. Both boys and girls agreed that the opportunity to be able to participate in sports, both on the playground and on school and community teams, was the major advantage of being male. At all grade levels males and females thought job opportunities were different and that males had more opportunities. (Data tables and instruments are appended.) (YLB)

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"My Worst Nightmare..." Wisconsin Students' Perceptions of Being the Other Gender

A Statewide Study to Document Current Gender Perceptions of Wisconsin Students

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"My Worst Nightmare..."
Wisconsin Students' Perceptions of
Being the Other Gender

A Statewide Study to Document
Current Gender Perceptions of Wisconsin Students

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February, 1993

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The skill and dedication of the staff at the Center for Vocational, Technical and Adult Education, University of Wisconsin-Stout, in helping to complete this project is greatly appreciated. A special thank you to Jeanne Stoeklen, Project Typist, Mary Weber, Program Assistant, Jackie Berg, Typist, and Tom Prescott, Information Processor Consultant.

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"My Worst Nightmare..."

Wisconsin Students' Perceptions of Being the Other Gender

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose and Description of Study

In January, 1992, Barbara Schuler, Ph.D., who is the Administrator for Vocational Equity/Single Parent Programs, Bureau of Vocational Education, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, requested and provided funding so that the Center for Vocational, Technical and Adult Education, University of Wisconsin-Stout could replicate research conducted in Colorado in 1982, entitled "'My Daddy Might Have Loved Me More': Student Perceptions of Differences Between Being Male and Being Female." (Baumgartner-Papageorgiou, 1982).

The overall purpose of this study was to document current gender perceptions of Wisconsin students as well as to compare responses to those reported in the Colorado study. This information could then be used by local school districts and Cooperative Educational Services Agencies in Wisconsin as they continue to implement the Wisconsin Model for Sex Equity in Career and Vocational Education and develop long range local equity plans. Comparison with the Colorado study was difficult due to the fact that we were unable to locate the author of the original study. Therefore, without access to the methodology and data it was hard to ascertain how the "effects"/conclusions were developed.

The Wisconsin study included 3,363 students in grades 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12 in 26 schools who were asked the question, "If you woke up tomorrow and discovered you were the opposite sex, how do you think your life would be different?" The schools were selected as representative of all Wisconsin schools in terms of student population and geographic location. The surveys were designed to elicit spontaneous, but typical, responses from students at various grade levels. These responses were categorized into a composite checklist of 78 items. Nineteen items received responses that were considered significant for analysis. Focus groups were later conducted to verify written survey results.

Review of Colorado Study Findings:

The Colorado study concluded that, "as a result of sex socialization, students see traditional sex roles as their only choice. Consequently, these students believe that their lives would change dramatically if their sex were different. The underlying themes which emerged from their descriptions of those changes highlight the damaging effects of sex role socialization." Twelve "effects" resulted from the data collected in the Colorado study in 1982. These "effects" are listed below with a response based on the Wisconsin data collected in 1992.

Effect #1 - Females learn that it is best not to work outside the home, but if one does, one should choose from a limited number of career options.

Response: There was absolutely no evidence that, in 1992, males or females think that women should not work outside the home and little evidence they thought that only certain jobs were appropriate. Not one male or female responding to the written survey, and only one girl in a focus group, said women could, would, or should stay home. However, some responses by both indicated that the care of children and the home was still the primary responsibility of females and that financially providing for the family was still the primary responsibility of the males.

Effect #2 - Females are taught to select careers which are less rewarding than those which males are taught to select.

Response: Although many females indicated it was more difficult to pursue some nontraditional jobs (astronaut, pilot, carpenter, etc.) and that it was impossible to be President, many boys and girls specifically stated that their career choices would not change.

Effect #3 - Females are taught that their most valuable asset is their appearance.

Response: Physical appearance, clothing, and grooming continue to be important and were the most frequently mentioned responses in the survey. Both females and males overwhelmingly agreed that girls "had to" spend more time on clothes, hair and make-up. Some females mentioned they would have to exercise, work out, and build muscle more if they were male, while men mentioned most often they would have to eat less and worry about their weight more if they were female.

Effect #4 - Males are taught that females are to be treated as sex objects; females are taught that such treatment is normal.

Response: There was plenty of evidence that both females and males agree that women are the recipients of demeaning treatment and often treated as sex objects. There also seemed to be a disturbing awareness on the part of men that this was occurring and an acknowledgement that they were perpetrators. There was no evidence apparent to the researchers that women thought such treatment was normal or acceptable.

Effect #5 - Males are taught to be independent, competitive, aggressive, and to use violence.

Response: Evidence also existed to confirm the finding that men are more independent, or at least more risk taking, and less self-conscious. Several females would have appreciated an opportunity to have more physical aggressiveness acceptable and to "be mean" more often. Males indicated they could be nicer, more cooperative and more compassionate if they were females.

Effect #6 - Females are taught to be dependent, compliant, and fearful.

Response: Several females at all grade levels acknowledged males did more things, were higher risk takers, were more likely to question authority and got in more trouble. However, both males and females felt being female was more dangerous with a higher likelihood of physical abuse and sexual assault. From that perspective, there was agreement that women were, and needed to be, more fearful.

Effect #7 - Males are taught to expect freedom; females are taught to expect restrictions.

Response: The evidence was not so much that females were taught to expect restrictions and males to expect freedom as it was an acknowledgement by females, and females only, that parents were more protective and concerned about their safety and that it resulted in less freedom and privileges at home.

Effect #8 - Males and females are taught that home and child care responsibilities are not to be shared equally.

Response: There was still evidence that both males and females agreed the primary responsibility for the home and child care is the domain of women.

Effect #9 - Males and females are taught only those skills which are consistent with traditional sex roles.

Response: There was no clear evidence of this.

Effect #10 - Males and females exclude themselves from courses and extracurricular activities in school that develop interests and talents which are valuable to both sexes.

Response: There was little, if any, evidence that this occurs.

Effect #11 - Females receive better treatment from teachers, but males get more encouragement to achieve.

Response: This was not confirmed in the responses to this study. Basically each gender thought the other was more favored by teachers. In the fourth and sixth grade, both boys and girls felt girls were expected to, and did, achieve more and that the expectations for males were lower.

Effect #12 - Both males and females are taught that being male is inherently better than being female.

Response: There was no evidence to suggest this was true. Generally, both females and males at all grade levels were satisfied with their gender. Males recognized their advantage in society and felt their position was one of power. They also thought they lacked in skills of compassion and creating and maintaining close relationships.

Wisconsin Gender Perception Findings

An analysis of Wisconsin students' survey responses indicate that, in the ten years since the Colorado research, many gender perceptions of males and females have changed but others have remained the same. The following findings emerged from analysis of Wisconsin students' responses to the question: "If you woke up tomorrow and discovered that you were the opposite sex, how do you think your life would be different?"

- Almost all girls and boys at all grade levels were satisfied with their gender and did not want to change. However, both girls and boys thought boys' lives were easier and more fun, while girls lives needed to be more responsible and serious. Also, girls had to, or do, worry more about everything from appearance, relationships and pregnancy to world peace.
- Boys and girls usually do not develop friendships with each other and often do not value or respect the strengths traditionally associated with the other gender. They frequently expressed animosity toward the other sex.
- Females and males agree that women are more often the recipients of demeaning treatment and agreed that this included not having your ideas and thoughts taken seriously, respected or listened to by others. They also agreed that women were often treated as sex objects and the victims of physical abuse and sexual assault resulting in more fear and less freedom for women.

- Grade school children were very rigid in their perceptions of appropriateness of games, toys and activities. They did not explore alternatives but chose only those typical or traditional to their gender possibly resulting in limited opportunities to develop a variety of skills and abilities. This perception of gender appropriate activities was not as evident at the high school level.
- Both girls and boys agreed that the opportunity to be able to freely participate in sports, both on the playground and on school and community teams, was the major advantage of being male. Students, particularly at the grade school level, indicated that playground activities (football, softball, kickball etc.) excluded girls and that few alternatives existed with the exception of jump rope.
- Students do not believe they are being taught only those skills consistent with traditional sex roles or that they exclude themselves from courses that develop the interests and talents that are valuable to both sexes. However, 1991 Secondary Vocational Education Enrollments (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Bureau of Vocational Education) would indicate that there is still traditional enrollment in many elective vocational courses and programs.
- The majority of students did not recognize or perceive differential treatment of boys and girls in the classroom. Responses from some individual classrooms within a school were highly rigid and stereotyped; indicating some teachers may be unconsciously teaching and reinforcing stereotypes. This may indicate that there is a need for increased awareness of both teachers and students regarding sex bias and sex role stereotyping, both subtle and overt, in the educational setting.
- Females and males believe the primary responsibility for home and child care is the domain of women and the primary responsibility of providing for the family is the domain of men even though both will be involved in work inside and outside the home.
- Both males and females believe women will work outside the home. Boys and girls recognize they have many career choices, although they see women as more likely to face pay and job discrimination and to more often be the victim of sexual harassment in the workplace.

A major caution is warranted: Comparing individual district responses with the composite results on each of the nineteen significant questions revealed very substantial differences. Therefore, individual school districts should be very cautious about assuming that the composite results are an accurate portrayal of their students. To verify local perceptions teachers should replicate the activity in their classrooms.

Evidence from this research suggests that although some progress in reducing bias and stereotyping has been made in Wisconsin through the efforts of many people to change student attitudes and expectations in our schools and classrooms, much remains to be done. The equity goals contained in the Wisconsin Model for Sex Equity in Career and Vocational Education (p. 9) are still appropriate and many resources are available to assist school districts and classroom teachers in their efforts to provide more fairness and opportunity in our schools.

For further information about this study, please contact: Barbara Schuler, Ph.D, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, (608) 267-9170; or Linda Riley, University of Wisconsin-Stout, (715) 232-1885.

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DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY

Introduction

This study replicated one that was conducted ten years ago in 1982 in the state of Colorado and involved approximately 2,000 students in grades 3-12. The Colorado study, "My Daddy Might Have Loved Me": Student Perceptions of Differences Between Being Male and Being Female," (1982) has attracted national attention. We feel the results of this study will be of value to our equity programs in Wisconsin and will also make a contribution to a data base used by other educators throughout the country who are interested in improving their equity programs.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine if there are differences in boys' and girls' gender role perceptions. More specifically, the study identified how boys and girls think their lives would change if they were a member of the other sex. Students were encouraged to record as many thoughts, comments and ideas as came to mind while they completed the survey. Teachers administering the form provided eight to ten minutes for students to complete the survey.

Sampling Plan

This study included students in grades 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12. The study design included collecting data from students in two school systems in each of the twelve regional Cooperative Educational Services Agencies (CESAs) in the state of Wisconsin. To assure that schools with a more diverse population were included, a large urban school district which has a majority of African American students and a school district with almost 100 percent American Indian students were added after the initial sampling. This provided a representative cross section of school systems and students. In addition, it was possible to do analyses by small, medium and large school districts.

Each CESA was asked to collect data from two school districts. The assignment of school sizes to CESAs considered the mix of school sizes in all twelve CESAs. Small school districts were those with 1,300 students or less in grades K-12. Medium size school districts enrolled 1,301 to 2,400 students in grades K-12. Large schools had more than 2,400 students in grades K-12. See Appendix A - Number of Students.

Grades 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12 were selected because students reach them at important points in their development. Several of these grade levels reflect periods when decisions in career planning occur. Also, data from several age levels were needed to determine when attitudes and perceptions develop and/or change.

The survey was designed for students who could write their own responses. School personnel were instructed that, if they had any students who were not able to respond in this manner, they should use the procedure that would typically be applied to a task like this in their school system. See Appendix B and C for a copy of the surveys and instructions for survey administrators.

Participating schools were directed to administer the survey to approximately 30 students at each grade level and to balance as much as possible the number of males and females participating. Most of the surveys were completed during April and May, 1992. Three school districts administered the forms during the following September.

Data Analysis

A checklist was developed to code the responses. After reading approximately 350 surveys, three project staff members reviewed a sample set and provided input for the design of an analysis checklist. This checklist was then used to score another sample set of surveys. Two people scored the same set and compared their results. Adjustments were made in the process and checklist until the scores were consistent. Completed checklists were processed by computer to obtain summaries by gender, grade level, and school size. Project staff members also recorded sample comments that were descriptive of student perceptions.

Written Surveys

It became apparent early in the review of the written surveys that it was very easy to let one very articulate and profound response cloud the perception of the responses of the group. Therefore, the analysis checklists enabled the reader to chart the frequency of the responses and maintain the integrity of the process. This checklist was organized according to the following major categories: Self, Family, School and Work. These categories correspond with the categories identified in The Wisconsin Model for Sex Equity in Career and Vocational Education (1990) and the equity strategies and activities found in the Classroom Activities in Sex Equity for Developmental Guidance (1988). The sex equity assessment surveys from The Wisconsin Model for Sex Equity in Career and Vocational Education (1990) have been administered in 143 schools in Wisconsin and the resulting data reports are also categorized by these identifiers.

This report of the gender perception survey is also organized by responses relating to issues of Self, Family, School and Work, and includes additional sections entitled Postsecondary Plans and Gender Satisfaction. The report also includes a discussion of the students' responses to the written surveys and a report on the focus groups conducted to verify the written results. Finally, it compares the study results with the conclusions of the original study conducted in Colorado in 1982 and reports the gender perceptions finding in Wisconsin. Please note that every effort was made to accurately report student comments; therefore, this study may contain spelling and syntax errors.

Of the 78 items on the analysis checklist, only 19 occurred frequently enough to be considered significant in at least one grade level. They included thirteen items in the category of Self, two in the category of Home, two in the category of School and two in the category of Work.

STUDENTS' RESPONSES RELATING TO ISSUES OF SELF

Responses related to concerns with personal appearance (clothing, grooming, weight/body image), physical and emotional issues (physical strength, emotional expression, body parts, bathroom habits, PMS, menstruation, mood swings, pregnancy, child bearing, sexual assault, harassment, rape, demeaning treatment, sexual objectification); personality traits and characteristics (self-esteem/confidence, kindness, understanding, empathy, machismo, fighting/aggression, friendliness, more interesting or more likeable); and interpersonal relationships (act/feel/think differently, quantity/quality of friendships, quality of treatment by others, respect for ideas, social pressure for manners and behaviors etc.) were categorized under issues involving Self. This area was the most important to young peoples' perceptions of gender differences. Thirteen of the twenty-eight items on the analysis checklist in this area had statistical significance with the majority of them being important at all grade levels. Some responses had more significance than others. Obvious differences such as body parts, clothing and grooming were among the most frequently mentioned with both boys and girls simply saying they were different or as some suggested "opposite everything."

Some students had very stereotyped, rigid perceptions and described a number of "rules" that applied to gender. One fourth grade girl who thought there were many differences expressed it as follows: "I think that I would dress different. I would probably like different sports better than others. I wouldn't wear dresses and skirts. My taste would be different. I would probably like the same foods. I think boys show off so I would probably try too. Also boys go crazy over girls so I would probably too. I think boys eat more than girls so I would too. I would try to act tough and usually get poor grades like most boys. I would get into a lot of trouble so the teachers would give me punches. I would get disciplined more at home and school. My room would be different in taste and probably color. I would probably hate school more and write messier. I would have shorter hair also. My friends would be different. I think the teachers are more strict and also nicer to boys. Teachers, I think, feel like boys should get more attention because then they won't get into as much trouble if they're nice to them. If it's a man teacher, they are nicer to the boys, and if it's a women teacher they are nicer to the girls. I would be a lot more immature than I am now!"

Items that were mentioned frequently included friendships, differences in the way one acts, thinks and feels, personal appearance, comments on PMS, mood shifts, issues of pregnancy and child bearing, quality of treatment, demeaning sexual treatment, physical strength, fighting and aggression, and respect for thoughts and ideas.

The children's typical perceptions of girls and boys were:

Girls:

sit down to go to the bathroom
 spend more time on personal appearance
 have to "match"
 wear uncomfortable clothes
 pierce two ears
 spend money on makeup and clothes
 play inside
 are clean and neat
 are quiet
 are nice
 don't lie
 don't lose their hair
 don't fight
 have pink rooms
 are more mature
 don't snore
 don't exercise
 like cats
 like to shop
 giggle
 have their ideas respected less
 are listened to less
 are more self-conscious

Boys:

stand up to go to the bathroom
 spend less time on personal appearance
 don't have to "match"
 wear comfortable clothes
 pierce one ear
 spend money on electronics
 play outside
 are dirty and sloppy
 are loud
 are mean
 do lie
 go bald
 do fight
 have blue and black rooms
 are less mature
 do snore
 do exercise
 like dogs
 don't like to shop
 laugh
 have their ideas respected more
 are listened to more
 have bigger egos

Life for boys is easier and more fun. At all levels both girls and boys agreed that "Boys do more stuff!" They are more daring and adventurous, go more places, have more fun, and are more flexible. As one fourth grade boy put it, "Boys can do more things than girls can imagine." One of the things that boys also can do is eat. One young man stated, "If I were a girl I would have to drink diet pop and eat wheat bread" and another said, "I don't think I could get used to not eating all the time." And girls said, "I would eat foods with fat and sugar; Not be so picky on choice of food; and I would eat ten times a day." They also agreed that boys had more peer pressure to conform, drink, smoke, use drugs and engage in sex.

Boys and girls also agreed that girls are more compassionate, caring, understanding and sensitive and that this resulted in better and closer friendships and better treatment of people generally. They overwhelmingly agreed girls have much more responsibility and more things to worry about.

There is apparently a serious double standard for etiquette and socially appropriate behavior as a number of boys and girls mentioned it, including a sixth grade boy who wrote, "If I woke up tomorrow and I was the opposite sex my life would change in many ways like I could not belch in public places. I would not use my hands to eat food like chicken, pork chops and ham. I also would stop bumping into people and not saying sorry." Several young women wrote, "If I were a boy I could belch, fart and scratch my private parts in public."

The difference most frequently mentioned (about 25 percent) was friendships. Girls commented on this subject more frequently than boys at every grade level and at the eighth grade mentioned it twice as often. Most often comments indicated that they would have different friends and less often that the quality of friendships was better if you were female. Many students also thought that they would think, act or feel differently, although they did not expand on the comments. At the fourth and sixth grade levels it was mentioned more often by girls than boys.

Childbearing, PMS and Pregnancy

Comments about child bearing were made frequently at every grade level and included thoughts by both girls and boys that it could be either a positive or a negative experience. Many girls thought that the worst thing about being male was that they could not have children and nearly an equal number concuded that it would be the biggest advantage of being male. Likewise, many males indicated that being able to have a baby would be a wonderful experience and others thought it would be far too painful and that they simply could not handle it.

The menstrual cycle and associated Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS) received numerous comments from both male and females. They used PMS as a synonym for being "bitchy," moody, emotional, crying and as one young man described it, "having uncontrollable systems of the body." In this area females thought not having PMS was definitely one of the advantages of being male and that it would be a relief not to have to be the victim of comments and jokes regarding it. Apparently the students are not receiving information about all sides of the research on PMS. One tenth grade girl stated, "If I were a boy, the next time I was in a bad mood, no one would ask me if I had PMS," and another said, "I just wish guys had to get the monthly cycle."

Considerable comment was made about pregnancy. From grade six through grade twelve the comments were the same, "If I were a girl I would have to worry about getting pregnant" and "If I were a boy I would not have to worry about getting pregnant." This concern was much more prevalent at tenth grade.

Sexual Assault, Harassment and Rape

Concerns with sexual assault, sexual harassment and rape were more prevalent at the upper grade levels, although some elementary students were aware of these issues. "I would stand against the wall so no one could look up my skirt" and "I might get raped or something stolen" were comments from fourth grade boys and an eighth grade boy said, "I would have to be more aware of my surroundings because women get raped and burglarized." A ninth grader stated, "I think I would learn karate because people can't seem to control themselves now a day" and a tenth grader said, "I would have to worry about getting raped or kidnapped." A female tenth grader stated, "I would be able to trust people easier because there wouldn't be as much fear of rape or abuse."

Quality of Treatment by Others

From about the sixth grade on, there was no doubt that both boys and girls thought that there was a difference in the quality of treatment and agreed that girls were not treated as well as boys. Boys seemed more aware of this and mentioned it much more frequently and in many cases were revealing about personal behavior. The following quotes are examples of the feelings expressed at the various grade levels: Sixth grade males stated: "I personally would not want to be a woman for discrimination reasons; Most girls are seen by their body and not by their personality; I would be very upset because I feel women are not treated fair in our society; I would have to go through puberty class and people would snap your bras and you couldn't play certain sports because your breasts would get in the way; and females are treated less superior and feel angry."

Eighth grade males said: "I'd have to put up with sarcastic remarks made by men; Women are subject to quite a bit of degradation from men; The typical male thinks that this sort of thing is natural, and ok, so it continues; I'd have to be careful who I date; I'd have to change my attitudes and be cautious because I would know men; It would effect my decision to have sex; I'd have to stay away from my friends, they are all pigs; and all the things I did to girls would be done to me."

At the high school level young men said things like: "I would hate getting hit on all the time; I'd be a very quiet person and not let any guys touch me; I couldn't have sex as often or else I would be known as a slut; I would not appreciate blonde jokes and comments about PMS; I am blonde and if I was female I'd dye my hair; I would never go out with a guy; and I'd have my tubes tied so I couldn't have kids and I'd move to an island were there were no men."

Interestingly, there were a number of statements by both young men and women at the high school level indicating that their beliefs and values would change. High school males expressed the following thoughts: "I would have very different opinions about right and wrong, maybe a more moral standing on some things; I would become a women's leader and a lot of my beliefs would change; I would take the issue of equal rights and abortion seriously; and my views would probably be stronger on abortion rights and rape cases."

Females came at the issue somewhat differently and discussed more often what kind of men they would be with regard to better treatment of, and more respect for, women with statements like: "I would treat girls with respect and not pressure them into anything they didn't want to do; and I would be nice and kind and respect women." Females often mentioned they would be respected more and listened to more if they were male. Again they also expressed a double standard for behavior. "I feel that men are less gossiped about in the areas concerning sex, dating and affairs, so if I was a male it would broaden my freedom spectrum by far; Instead of being a slut and a loud mouth, they would see me as a stud and outgoing; and I'd be better able to have sex without an attachment or a religious thing on my mind" were statements reflecting the double standard.

STUDENTS' RESPONSES RELATING TO FAMILY

Responses involving issues of family and home included: treatment at home such as respect, being listened to, freedom, rights and responsibility, and discipline; preference for activities, gifts, toys, television shows and books; work of the family including difficulty and amount; and relationships with parents and siblings.

In the upper grades, freedom, privileges and rights became significant issues for girls and was mentioned by 9.1 percent of girls at the tenth grade level and 8.7 percent of girls at the twelfth grade level who said they would have more of each if they were boys. They also said their parents would be more relaxed and not worry about them so much if they were boys. Boys did not mention this item.

The most significant issues coded under the heading Family were activities, gifts, and toys. This was mentioned at the fourth grade level by 36.6 percent of students and diminished to 7 percent of the twelfth grade respondents. Most girls and boys indicated these items would simply be different, although not better or worse, more or less. They perceived great differences in play and activities as evidenced by the two most frequent comments, "I would (or wouldn't) play with Barbies" and "I would play jump rope instead of football" (or vice versa). They thought that their room color and decor would be different; they would read different books and watch different television shows, ("I would watch war shows instead of Care Bears"); they would like different animals and play different musical instruments.

Surprisingly, few children mentioned differences in relationships with family members and when they did, the perceptions of both males and females were varied and seem to indicate that same gender relationships were closer and stronger. Generally both boys and girls made the majority of comments about their relationships with their mothers. Females expressed this with statements about their relationships with their mother such as, "My mom wouldn't be able to have a daughter. She wanted a girl. She loves me on my own; My mom would be mad; and My mom would treat me different and not show me as much love." They perceived the relationships with their fathers might change with statements like, "My dad would have the son he always wanted" (this student later said she would not want to be a boy) and a twelfth grade girl stated that, if she were a boy, "I'd probably care more about the fact that I don't have a father."

Male expressions regarding their mothers took the form of, "If I woke up a different sex, I'd probably be liked by my mom; My mom might kind of like it" and one twelfth grade boy wrote, "My relationship with my family would change like with my mother and sister. They have some very strange ideas and I don't understand them very often. Maybe if I was female I would." An equal number felt they would get more favored treatment if they were the opposite sex. One boy and one girl said, "My parents might love me more." Two girls said they thought it would make a difference with their grandparents: "My grandma would invite me over more because she likes boys better" and "My grandparents would give me more credit for the things I do good and they would give me more presents."

In the area of work of the family, approximately six percent indicated it would be different but did not place a value on the difference. Not one respondent said that if they were a boy they would have to solely work to support the family, but many boys and girls did indicate that males have the primary responsibility for providing for the family. Likewise, neither thought that if they were a girl they would not have to work outside the home; however, many did indicate the majority of the work caring for the home and children was still primarily the responsibility of women.

STUDENTS' RESPONSES RELATING TO SCHOOL

The research by Myra and David Sadker (1981), summaries of research published by the American Association of University Women (Shortchanging Girls, Shortchanging America, 1991), the research cited in the Gender/Ethnic Expectations Student Achievement Program (1990), and others have consistently documented significant differences in the ways boys and girls are treated in the classroom in areas of student/teacher interaction, expectations, and discipline. Significant differences in educational outcomes also exist and are available from testing sources, state education agencies, etc. In this survey, however, there was almost no evidence that boys and girls agreed they were treated differently. Significant comments on the school experience were limited to eighth grade students' feelings that the opposite sex received favored treatment and at all grade levels involvement and participation in sports (which was coded under the heading of School) was mentioned by both boys and girls. However, there were some statements indicating that at least a few students, mostly girls, felt there was a difference.

The general consensus of both boys and girls was that girls had better penmanship, were more skilled in drawing, singing, dancing and music, and that girls read much more than boys. In elementary school both agreed that girls liked school more, were smarter, and that it was more acceptable for girls to achieve in school. They also agreed boys were, or were more stereotyped as, bigger troublemakers and that they received more teacher attention. Several sixth grade boys commented, "We are not respected for the work we do because we have messy handwriting; I wish I would be graded on performance; and I think teachers would be more lenient if I were a girl." Both boys and girls felt that generally teachers favored the other gender with some individual schools in agreement about who favored whom.

By high school, however, some girls were not so sure that they were smarter and felt that teacher treatment, particularly in nontraditional classes, was disrespectful of their gender as evidenced by comments such as, "Mr. _____ wouldn't treat me like an idiot and explain, 'one more time for the girls who don't understand'; My gym teachers would give me more credit for my athletic ability and my strength; People would expect more of me - like in woods class everyone helps me and I could do it myself; and I believe I'd have an easier time in science and math because teachers are chummier with the boys because they think they are better in these two subjects."

Sports involvement was the most frequently mentioned subject coded under the category of School and the second most frequently mentioned item in the entire survey. Students' comments about how their participation in sports would change were tallied on the analysis check list as indicated on the right hand column of the table below. It was most evident at the sixth grade level where it was mentioned by nearly one half of the girls and by 29.3 percent of the boys. The frequency of this item decreased with grade level. Most girls thought more opportunity for sports participation would be a positive outcome of being a boy and most boys indicated they thought less opportunity to participate in sports would be a negative outcome of being a girl. The following table shows the frequency of voluntary responses in this area.

Table 1
What Students Said About Sports Involvement

(Reported in percentages)

	Composite			4th			6th			8th			10th			12th		
	Total	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	F	M
Mentioned sports	23.7	27.9	19.3	26.3	31.4	21.4	38.7	48.3	29.7	22.1	25.0	19.3	15.7	18.4	11.1	14.1	16.2	11.5
1. More involvement and that it would be positive	7.4	13.9	0.6	6.6	13.5	0.0	13.6	26.6	1.4	7.4	14.4	0.8	4.6	8.1	0.3	4.2	7.2	0.4
2. More involvement and that it would be negative	2.4	4.7	0.1	2.3	4.7	0.0	3.8	7.6	0.3	2.5	4.9	0.3	1.4	2.5	0.0	2.1	3.8	0.0
3. Involvement would be different	7.6	8.7	6.5	10.1	12.3	7.9	10.2	12.8	7.7	5.7	5.2	6.1	7.2	8.6	5.4	4.7	4.7	4.7
4. Less involvement and that would be negative	5.9	0.6	11.4	7.2	0.9	13.2	10.5	0.6	19.7	5.9	0.5	10.9	2.4	0.3	5.1	2.6	0.6	5.1
5. Less involvement and that would be positive	0.4	0.1	0.7	0.1	0.0	0.3	.6	.6	.6	0.7	0.0	1.3	0.2	0.0	0.3	0.5	0.0	1.2
Did not mention sports	76.3			73.7			61.3			77.9			84.3			85.9		

Many elementary school girls expressed a desire to be able to play more sports and some thought the opportunities that were available to boys and girls were unequal as described by a sixth grade girl who wrote, "Sports would be different because boys always seem to be treated better, get nicer equipment and fields." It was very clear from reading the responses that girls were not included and that boys were clearly aware of the exclusion as expressed in statements like, "It would be terrible, if I asked to play sports, the boys would say no way - forget it. I'd say but I'm as good as all of you and they'd laugh and laugh." Many statements indicated there were few choices for either boys or girls on the playground with the most common expression being: "I'd have to play/would play football instead of jump rope; or I'd play jump rope instead of football." Boys often indicated girls lacked the strength to be athletic and in one case expressed it like this: "In gym, instead of doing pull-ups, I would just hang there."

Sports also received some negative comments when boys at every grade level indicated that it would be nice not to have so much pressure to play sports and the tenth grade girl who wrote, "I would have more pressure to play sports but I am smart enough to be able to get out of it."

Girls felt sports offered positive outcomes in addition to participation and inclusion, and expressed it as follows: "One advantage would be that if I played sports, I would know for sure I would pass my classes; I wouldn't get so much static in the weight room; and I'd get a lot more attention from colleges in sports." Many girls simply wished people would take their interest and ability in athletics seriously.

Many boys indicated they would no longer be able to be professional athletes as indicated by the one fourth grade and one sixth grade boy who wrote, "As for the future, if I stayed a girl I'd commit suicide because I want to play major league baseball. I guess I'd have to play softball for a bar" and "It would be a fate worse than death because I couldn't be a professional athlete." The expectation for boys in elementary school that they could be and would be professional athletes was very common.

STUDENTS' RESPONSES RELATING TO WORK

Jobs and Careers

Responses relating to career choices, job and salary opportunities, job discrimination and sexual harassment in the workplace were categorized under this heading. Significant responses occurred in the areas of career choice and job opportunity. Career choices surface at the sixth grade being mentioned by 8.2 percent of girls and 8.3 percent of boys, both agreeing that boys have more career choices. This remained relatively stable through the twelfth grade.

Job opportunities became a significant response at the sixth grade level when it was mentioned by 8.6 percent of females and 8.9 percent of males, and increased in importance at each grade level until at the twelfth grade when it was mentioned by 16.2 percent of young women and 17 percent of young men. At all grade levels males and females thought job opportunities were different and that there were more opportunities for males. Most often in the fourth and sixth grade students (both boys and girls) focused on opportunities for careers in professional sports. One sixth grade boy wrote, "The only thing girls get awards for is the Olympics so that is the only good job for girls." Many sixth grade boys felt their lives would be ruined because they couldn't be professional athletes and apparently all thought they had a chance to do that. This was the major reason why boys would not want to change genders.

In addition to lack of opportunity for careers in professional sports, girls identified lack of opportunities in holding political office; specifically, the lack of opportunity to be in the House and Senate and, more often, the chance to be President. This advantage was not lost on boys. As one sixth grade boy put it, "Women also don't get as much of an opportunity to be in Congress and the men always get to be President." It was also perceived as easier to be carpenters, auto mechanics, astronauts, police officers and scientists. However, it is important to note that a number of students did state that their career choices would not change.

Both males and females thought opportunities in the military are better for men. One young woman said, "I would have much more leeway in picking a unit in the National Guard since infantry units don't let females in." Comments such as: "If I were a woman and joined the army, I wouldn't be out in the field fighting, I'd have to be behind a desk." "As a woman, I couldn't be in the air force and fly a plane, but I could be a secretary," and "If I were to get into the military, I would have a 100 percent easier time because I feel they would pick a man to do a job rather than a woman," reflected young men's perceptions of the differences in opportunities for careers in the military.

Both boys and girls indicated that generally speaking women were not treated as well. A sixth grade boy wrote, "I think that most chances would have to do with equality and opportunity. Females are, even now in 1992, oppressed. Jobs and schools are not always as easy to get into as a woman. I would have to face more discrimination not only at work but throughout life and face many more hardships." A twelfth grade female wrote, "Women who succeed or are high up in a company get looked down on by men" and a twelfth grade male who wants to change things wrote, "I won't look down on them, I'll appreciate them."

Generally speaking, both agreed that it would be easier for men to get jobs; and once in the workforce, expectations for treatment were different. However, not all agreed that it would be more difficult. A few girls and several boys felt women had the advantage in the workplace. One tenth grade male wrote, "After college, when I have to go out and get a job, it would probably be easier because of the women's rights activists pressuring employers into equal treatment, the employer will be hiring more women to equal out the men." A twelfth grader added, "Women sometimes have better opportunities than men do. The women's lib is threatening to get out of hand. Now when an employer has to choose between two qualified men and women, the women will sue the employer and will probably win. Because the democratic control in Congress, this unfair system has been allowed to survive." Another twelfth grade male said, "I would expect to achieve my career goals a lot faster than I would now because females tend to have more doors open to them now than males." Students seemed to be unaware of the statistics on women in the workforce and instead were influenced by media or limited knowledge of workforce litigation.

Postsecondary Plans

On the survey form for students in grades 8, 10 and 12 an additional question asked them to indicate their plans after high school. Table 2 below details their responses.

Table 2
Postsecondary Plans*
(Reported in percentages)

What are your plans after high school?	8th			10th			12th		
	Total	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	F	M
1. Go to work	8.3	5.7	10.7	10.1	9.7	10.5	11.0	10.9	11.1
2. Go to technical or two-year college	14.1	12.5	15.5	19.2	20.6	17.6	21.6	22.8	20.2
3. Go to college/university	81.5	69.0	65.7	60.8	64.4	56.4	59.5	60.6	58.1
4. Go into the military	6.4	3.5	9.2	8.2	5.8	11.1	6.3	3.1	10.3
5. Do not know	6.8	5.2	8.4	6.3	5.0	7.8	2.3	1.3	3.6
6. Other	2.1	0.8	3.3	0.9	1.4	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4

*This question appeared on the 8th, 10th, and 12th grade surveys only.

At all three grade levels surveyed with the question "What are your plans after high school?", females more often than males indicated they planned to pursue postsecondary education both at technical or two-year colleges, or at four-year colleges and universities with the exception of the eighth grade where more males than females indicated they would attend a technical or two-year college. However, as students progressed in school the percentage of both males and females choosing a technical school/two-year college increased.

At every grade level, males more often expected to go into the military; however, the numbers decreased each year. Almost twice as many boys as girls at the eighth grade level thought they would go into a world of work (10.7/5.7) but by the twelfth grade approximately 11.0 percent of all students indicated they would enter the workforce upon graduation. Additionally, at every grade level more males than females indicated they did not know what they were going to do after completing high school but by the twelfth grade only 2.3 percent of the total marked that option.

GENDER SATISFACTION

All comments on the written surveys that referred to changing gender were noted on the checklist. Overwhelmingly, both boys and girls appeared to be satisfied with their gender. Of the 3,363 survey respondents, 41.4 percent commented on changing gender. Of those, 17.5 percent simply stated that it would be different with girls identifying the difference twice as often as boys. The frequency of this response varied by grade level as described in Table 3.

Table 3

Gender Satisfaction* (Reported in percentages)

	Composite			4th			6th			8th			10th			12th		
	Total	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	F	M
1. Very Satisfied	4.2	3.3	5.1	3.4	3.5	3.4	4.1	4.9	3.4	4.9	3.5	6.1	4.7	2.2	7.8	3.5	2.2	5.1
2. Satisfied	16.2	14.0	18.5	22.3	19.4	25.1	18.5	18.3	18.6	10.1	9.8	10.4	14.8	11.9	18.2	15.7	10.9	21.7
3. Noted Difference	19.5	23.4	11.2	16.1	22.0	10.4	21.7	26.3	17.4	18.5	26.4	11.2	15.1	20.0	9.0	15.4	22.5	6.3
4. Did Not Comment	59.6	55.3	64.2	56.8	53.0	60.2	53.2	45.9	60.0	63.3	55.1	71.0	62.5	61.2	64.3	63.0	71.3	65.3
5. Like to Change	2.4	4.0	.9	1.3	2.1	.6	2.4	4.6	0.3	3.2	5.2	1.3	2.9	4.7	0.7	2.4	3.1	1.6
6. Very Much Like to Change	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

*59.6% of students did not make any comment on whether or not they were satisfied with their gender.

Many of the respondents stated it would be different and some described how it would be different. However, few specifically stated that they would not like to change and even fewer that they would like to change. As the table indicates, overall, boys more often mentioned being "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the exception of fourth and sixth grade girls who more often indicated they were "very satisfied." The largest difference was at the tenth and twelfth grade. At the tenth grade, three times as many boys as girls indicated they were "very satisfied" and at the twelfth grade, boys identified being "satisfied" approximately twice as often as girls. Very few students indicated they would "like to change" or "very much like to change." Of those who did, females more often indicated they would "like to change" and males "very much like to change."

Generally, boys most often did not want to change gender because of the opportunities in sports for males, inferior treatment, opportunity in work and life, and that it would be generally harder. Girls most often did not want to change because they wanted to be able to bear children. Girls who did want to change identified that it would be much easier to be male and they would be able to play more sports and do more things. Most often boys more graphically represented their feelings about changing genders and used more aggressive and violent language than females. For the readers clarification on coding student comments about gender satisfaction, the following list is a sampling of comments and how they were coded.

Sample Comments Regarding Gender Satisfaction

Very Satisfied:

Females

I would hate it. (grade 6)

I would kill myself. (grade 8)

My life would turn into a living hell! I would never want to be male. They're always out to prove something and they don't have much to prove. They're egotistical little snakes in the grass and my life would be ruined. Females are the superior gender! (grade 12)

I like being female because it is more of a challenge and it shows you how tough females are. I wouldn't want to be male because they take everything for granted. I wouldn't trade being the superior female I am because I'm having way too much fun. (grade 12)

Males

I would hate it because I like to be a boy and I couldn't be a football player and I hate things that girls do and I hate girls' things and I hate girl work. (grade 4)

I would just hate it. I just love being male and I'm glad I'm going to be a male for the rest of my life. (grade 6)

I would commit suicide by shooting myself with my hunting gun! I would stab myself in the face with a butcher knife if the gun just wounded me so I wouldn't have to be a girl, or I would light myself on fire and jump off a bridge. (grade 6)

Three words can describe it: my worst nightmare. I wish I hadn't been asked this question I just got over the flu. (grade 6)

I would kill myself. (grade 8)

I think I'd kill myself because I like the power that comes with manhood. (grade 10)

Satisfied:

Females

I would be mad because I want to have kids. (grade 6)

I hope I don't because I like the self who I am. (grade 6)

I want to be female because of all the things about females. (grade 6)

It would be nice for a day but I would rather be a woman any day. (grade 8)

If I was a guy, I would not like it. I think males are too influenced by their friends. I am very goal oriented and I think males cannot have serious goals. Males seem to have to enjoy their free time and not worry about important things in life like friends, family, careers, and values. (grade 12)

I don't want to be a man because I think women have a great deal of place and influence in the world and many ladders to crawl up. I want to crawl up those ladders. (grade 12)

I don't think I would like it but it looks like men have it easier. (grade 12)

Males

I don't want to be a girl. I like the sex I am. (grade 4)

I hope I stay a boy because it would be hard to be a girl. (grade 6)

I'd rather stay a genuine, official boy because being a boy is more than being a girl. (grade 6)

I like being a boy because you get to do more stuff. (grade 6)

I think males have an advantage over females so I would just like to be a male and stay a male. (grade 10)

Like to Change:

Female

It would be better because guys don't have to go through as much things as girls have to. (grade 10)

It would probably be better to be a guy. Us women have a lot of problems to take care of. (grade 12)

I would like it. I wouldn't have so many worries. Males don't make a lot of decisions in life - they are just there. (grade 12)

Males

I would be a little happy because nobody would ever hit me. (grade 4)

Very Much Like to Change:

Females

My life would be awesome. I would love it. I think that we would have more choices, more time and I could have an attitude. (grade 12)

Males

I always wanted to be a girl and wish I was when I was born. (grade 6)

ANALYSIS OF SCHOOLS BY SIZE

An analysis of school districts by size produced some significant variation in responses. They are listed below.

Significant Response Differences

- The frequency with which children identified changes in quantity and quality of friendships increased significantly from small to large schools.
- Males in small and large schools more often mentioned that being female would have a more negative impact on sports participation and involvement than males in medium size schools.
- Females in medium sized schools saw being more involved in sports as a result of being male more negatively than females in small or large schools.
- Girls and boys in medium and large schools mentioned the importance of clothing and personal appearance more often than boys and girls in small schools.
- Only in large schools did boys and girls mention the importance of machismo with boys saying they wouldn't have to act so macho and girls saying that they would.
- On several items females and males in large schools perceived more differences in gender than in small schools and disproportionately they were perceptions identified by males.
- Girls in large schools mentioned they would have more freedom three times more often than girls in small schools.
- More opportunities for jobs was mentioned significantly more often in medium sized schools than in either small or large schools.

INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL ANALYSIS

Perhaps the most startling analysis was that of the individual schools. All nineteen significant responses were analyzed by individual schools and tremendous variance occurred. Below is an example of the variation in response to just one question, Job Opportunities, from the analysis check list.

Table 4

Sample Individual School Responses - Job Opportunities

(Reported in percentages)

School	District Total	Female Responses				Male Responses			
		Total	Different	More	Less	Total	Different	More	Less
A	13.0	21.4	7.1	14.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
B	24.1	23.1	23.1	0.0	0.0	24.3	18.0	0.0	6.3
C	9.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	28.6	0.0	0.0	28.6
D	38.1	33.3	16.7	16.7	0.0	22.2	0.0	0.0	22.2
E	5.0	10.0	0.0	10.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
F	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
G	48.0	35.7	0.0	35.7	0.0	63.7	18.2	0.0	45.5
H	11.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	28.6	0.0	14.3	14.3

All questions analyzed resulted in variance as depicted above. Therefore, caution must be exercised in drawing conclusions from the composite data and applying it to individual schools.

FOCUS GROUPS

After the analysis and coding of the 3,363 written responses was completed, focus groups were held to validate the data. These groups were conducted in three school districts in grades 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12 replicating the populations participating in the written survey.

Focus group sessions began with brief introductions of the researchers and the organizational instructions for the activity. Students were then divided into two groups by gender and asked to respond to the question: "If you woke up tomorrow and discovered that you were the opposite sex, how do you think your life would be different?" Two minutes were allowed for students to individually think about the question. Responses were then shared for approximately 15 minutes and all responses were recorded by the facilitators. Groups generated approximately 30 responses per group. The remaining time was spent on age appropriate world of work information, the importance of math and science in careers and increasing options for all. The film, "Fable of He and She" was shown to each group at the end of the session with time for discussion and questions.

The ability to generate and react to a variety of issues in the small group setting, and the general agreement that resulted, gave credence to the results and process used to collect information through the written survey. All of the areas identified in the written surveys were identified in the focus groups with little or no disagreement with the majority of conclusions. The only two areas where students voiced disagreement with each other were in treatment and relationships at home and treatment in the school setting. As one might expect, issues of sexuality and sexual

experiences were less frequently mentioned than in the written surveys. Sometimes when they were, and a comfort level with the researcher had been established, results and comments replicated those in the written responses. This was most likely to occur when the classroom teacher was not present in the classroom. Students at all grade levels seemed to thoroughly enjoy the activity and were very interested and cooperative.

CONCLUSION

The overall purpose of this study was to replicate the Gender Study conducted in Colorado ten years ago for comparison purposes and to document current gender perceptions of students in Wisconsin Schools.

Comparison with the Colorado study was difficult due to the fact that we were unable to locate the author of the original study. Therefore, without access to the methodology and data it was hard to ascertain how the "effects"/conclusions were developed.

Comparison with the Colorado Study

The Colorado study, "My Daddy Might Have Loved Me": Student Perceptions of Differences Between Being Male and Being Female" concluded that, "as a result of sex socialization, students see traditional sex roles as their only choice. Consequently, these students believe that their lives would change dramatically if their sex were different. The underlying themes which emerged from their descriptions of those changes highlight the damaging effects of sex role socialization." In the ten years since the Colorado research, many perceptions of males and females have changed but others have remained the same. The following twelve conclusions, called "effects" from the Colorado study are listed below. A response based on the Wisconsin Gender Perception Study data follows each effect.

Effect #1 - Females learn that it is best not to work outside the home, but if one does, one should choose from a limited number of career options.

Response: There was absolutely no evidence that, in 1992, males or females think that women should not work outside the home and little evidence they thought that only certain jobs were appropriate. Not one male or female responding to the written survey, and only one girl in a focus group, said women could, would, or should stay home. However, some responses by both indicated that the care of children and the home was still the primary responsibility of females and that financially providing for the family was still the primary responsibility of the males.

Effect #2 - Females are taught to select careers which are less rewarding than those which males are taught to select.

Response: Although many females indicated it was more difficult to pursue some nontraditional jobs (astronaut, pilot, carpenter, etc.) and that it was impossible to be President, many boys and girls specifically stated that their career choices would not change.

Effect #3 - Females are taught that their most valuable asset is their appearance.

Response: Physical appearance, clothing, and grooming continue to be important and were the most frequently mentioned response in the survey. Both female and males overwhelmingly agreed that girls "had to" spend more time on clothes, hair and make-up. Some females mentioned they would have to exercise, work out, and build muscle more if they were male, while men mentioned most often they would have to eat less and worry about their weight more if they were female.

Effect #4 - Males are taught that females are to be treated as sex objects; females are taught that such treatment is normal.

Response: There was plenty of evidence that both females and males agree that women are the recipients of demeaning treatment and often treated as sex objects. There also seemed to be a disturbing awareness on the part of men that this was occurring and an acknowledgement that they were perpetrators. There was no evidence apparent to the researchers that women thought such treatment was normal or acceptable.

Effect #5 - Males are taught to be independent, competitive, aggressive, and to use violence.

Response: Evidence also existed to confirm the finding that men are more independent, or at least more risk taking, and less self-conscious. Several females would have appreciated an opportunity to have more physical aggressiveness acceptable and to "be mean" more often. Males indicated they could be nicer, more cooperative and more compassionate if they were females.

Effect #6 - Females are taught to be dependent, compliant, and fearful.

Response: Several females at all grade levels acknowledged males did more things, were higher risk takers, were more likely to question authority and got in more trouble. However, both males and females felt being female was more dangerous with a higher likelihood of physical abuse and sexual assault. From that perspective, there was agreement that women were, and needed to be, more fearful.

Effect #7 - Males are taught to expect freedom; females are taught to expect restrictions.

Response: The evidence was not so much that females were taught to expect restrictions and males to expect freedom as it was an acknowledgement by females, and females only, that parents were more protective and concerned about their safety and that it resulted in less freedom and privileges at home.

Effect #8 - Males and females are taught that home and child care responsibilities are not to be shared equally.

Response: There was still evidence that both males and females agreed the primary responsibility for the home and child care is the domain of women.

Effect #9 - Males and females are taught only those skills which are consistent with traditional sex roles.

Response: There was no clear evidence of this.

Effect #10 - Males and females exclude themselves from courses and extracurricular activities in school that develop interests and talents which are valuable to both sexes.

Response: There was little, if any, evidence that this occurs.

Effect #11 - Females receive better treatment from teachers, but males get more encouragement to achieve.

Response: This was not confirmed in the responses to this study. Basically each gender thought the other was more favored by teachers. In the fourth and sixth grade, both boys and girls felt girls were expected to, and did, achieve more and that the expectations for males were lower.

Effect #12 - Both males and females are taught that being male is inherently better than being female.

Response: There was no evidence to suggest this was true. Generally, both females and males at all grade levels were satisfied with their gender. Males recognized their advantage in society and felt their position was one of power. They also thought they lacked in skills of compassion and creating and maintaining close relationships.

Wisconsin Gender Perception Findings

The following findings emerged from analysis of Wisconsin students' responses to the question: "If you woke up tomorrow and discovered that you were the opposite sex, how do you think your life would be different?"

- Almost all girls and boys at all grade levels were satisfied with their gender and did not want to change. However, both girls and boys thought boys' lives were easier and more fun, while girls lives needed to be more responsible and serious and girls had to, or do, worry more about everything from appearance, relationships and pregnancy to world peace.
- Boys and girls do not develop friendships with each other and often do not value or respect the strengths traditionally associated with the other gender. They frequently expressed animosity toward the other sex.
- Females and males agree that women are more often the recipients of demeaning treatment and agreed that that included not having your ideas and thoughts taken seriously, respected or listened to by others. They also agreed that women were often treated as sex objects, the victims of physical abuse and sexual assault, and that this resulted in more fear and less freedom for women.
- Grade school children were very rigid in their perceptions of appropriateness of game, toys and activities. They did not explore alternatives but chose only those typical or traditional to their gender possibly resulting in limited opportunities to develop a variety of skills and abilities. This perception of gender appropriate activities was not as evident at the high school level.
- Both girls and boys agreed that the opportunity to be able to participate in sports, both on the playground and on school and community teams, was the major advantage of being male. Students, particularly at the grade school level, indicated that playground activities (football, softball, kickball etc.) excluded girls and that few alternatives existed with the exception of jump rope.
- Students do not believe they are being taught only those skills consistent with traditional sex roles or that they exclude themselves from courses that develop the interests and talents that are valuable to both sexes. However, 1991 Secondary Vocational Education Enrollments (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Bureau of Vocational Education) would indicate that there is still traditional enrollment in many elective vocational courses and programs.
- The majority of students did not recognize or perceive differential treatment of boys and girls in the classroom. Responses from some individual classrooms within a school were highly rigid and stereotyped; indicating some teachers may be unconsciously teaching and reinforcing stereotypes. This may indicate that there is a need for increased awareness of both teachers and students regarding sex bias and sex role stereotyping in the educational setting both subtle and overt.
- Females and males believe the primary responsibility for home and child care is the domain of women and the primary responsibility of providing for the family is the domain of men even though both will be involved in work inside and outside the home.
- Both males and females believe woman will work outside the home. They recognize they have many career choices, although they see woman as more likely to face pay and job discrimination and to more often be the victim of sexual harassment in the workplace.

A major caution is warranted: Comparing individual district responses with the composite results on each of the nineteen significant questions revealed very substantial differences. Therefore, individual school districts should be very cautious about assuming that the composite results are an accurate portrayal of their students. To verify local perceptions teachers should replicate the activity in their classrooms.

Evidence from this research suggests that although some progress in reducing bias and stereotyping has been made in Wisconsin through the efforts of many people to change student attitudes and expectations in our schools and classrooms, much remains to be done. The equity goals contained in the Wisconsin Model for Sex Equity in Career and Vocational Education (p. 9) are still appropriate and many resources are available to assist school districts and classroom teachers in their efforts to provide more fairness and opportunity in our schools.

For further information about this study, please contact: Barbara Schuler, Ph.D, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, (608) 267-9170; or Linda Riley, University of Wisconsin-Stout, (715) 232-1885.

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Appendix A
Students Participating
in Survey

Gender Survey Population by Grade and Gender

Grade	Female		Male		Total
4th	341	(49%)	355	(51%)	696
6th	327	(48.3%)	350	(51.7%)	677
8th	368	(48.4%)	393	(51.6%)	761
10th	360	(54.9%)	296	(45.1%)	656
12th	320	(55.8%)	253	(44.2%)	573
TOTAL F/M	1716	51%	1647	49%	3363 = 100%

Survey Population by School Size

School Size	Total N %	Female N %	Male N %
Small (less than 1300 students)	1018 30	518 30	500 31
Medium (1301-2400 students)	907 27	438 26	469 28
Large (more than 2401 students)	1438 43	760 44	678 41

Appendix B

Copy of Survey and Instructions to Survey Administrators Grades 4 and 6

Gender Survey

TO: Survey Administrators

Introduction

This survey is a part of a study to determine the gender perceptions of boys and girls. We are interested in identifying how they perceive the differences in the experiences and opportunities of individuals of the opposite sex or gender. Your students do not need to put their names on the survey. The report of this study will not identify individuals or schools. This study is funded by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction through the Bureau for Vocational Education and conducted by the Center for Vocational, Technical and Adult Education at UW-Stout. Your assistance in administering these forms is appreciated.

Thirty copies of the survey are enclosed in this envelope. If you need more copies for your class, duplicate additional copies and use the same color paper if it is available.

This survey may result in questions and discussion in your class. Please have your students complete their responses and turn them into you before you discuss the question. This will help to keep the survey administration process the same in all schools.

Directions: Please do the following as you administer the survey. If you have students who are unable to write their own responses, follow your usual procedures for completing this type of task.

1. Ask your students to put their grade level at the top of the survey form. This can be placed in the upper left hand corner.
2. If necessary, mention to them that "Opposite Sex" means girls would be boys and boys would be girls. If you feel that it is appropriate, you may read the questions to your students.
3. Encourage them to write down everything that comes to mind. We would like to have more than one idea/comment listed on each survey form.
4. After you collect the complete surveys, put them in the envelope and fill out the label on the front of the envelope. We need to have you indicate your school district, the grade level of your class, and the date.
5. Please return the packet of materials as directed.

I want to thank you for helping us with this survey. Copies of the results will be distributed to the Equity Cadre Members in your CESA next fall. I will ask them to share a copy with you.

Linda Riley
CVTAE/UW-Stout

Gender Survey

Directions: Read the following questions and write your responses in the space below.
If you need more space, use the back of this page.

1. If you woke up tomorrow and discovered that you were the opposite sex, how do you think your life would be different?

2. What gender are you?

_____ (1) Female

_____ (2) Male

This study is funded by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction through the Bureau for Vocational Education and conducted by CVTAE at UW-Stout.

Appendix C

**Copy of Survey
and Introductions to
Survey Administrators
Grades 8 - 12**

Gender Survey

TO: Survey Administrators

Introduction

This survey is a part of a study to determine the gender perceptions of boys and girls. We are interested in identifying how they perceive the differences in the experiences and opportunities of individuals of the opposite sex or gender. Your students do not need to put their names on the survey. The report of this study will not identify individuals or schools. This study is funded by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction through the Bureau for Vocational Education and conducted by the Center for Vocational, Technical and Adult Education at UW-Stout. Your assistance in administering these forms is appreciated.

Thirty copies of the survey are enclosed in this envelope. If you need more copies for your class, duplicate additional copies and use the same color paper if it is available.

This survey may result in questions and discussion in your class. Please have your students complete their responses and turn them into you before you discuss the question. This will help to keep the survey administration process the same in all schools.

Directions: Please do the following as you administer the survey. The survey is designed for students who can write their own responses. If you have students who are unable to write their own responses, follow your usual procedures for completing this type of task.

1. Ask your students to put their grade level at the top of the survey form. This can be placed in the upper left hand corner.
2. If necessary, mention to them that "Opposite Sex" means girls would be boys and boys would be girls.
3. Encourage them to write down everything that comes to mind. We would like to have more than one idea/comment listed on each survey form.
4. After you collect the complete surveys, put them in the envelope and fill out the label on the front of the envelope. We need to have you indicate your school district, the grade level of your class, and the date.
5. Please return the packet of materials as directed.

I want to thank you for helping us with this survey. Copies of the results will be distributed to the Equity Cadre Members in your CESA next fall. I will ask them to share a copy with you.

Linda Riley
CVTAE/UW-Stout

Gender Survey

Directions: Read the following questions and write your responses in the space below.
If you need more space, use the back of this page.

1. If you woke up tomorrow and discovered that you were the opposite sex, how do you think your life would be different?

2. What gender are you?

____ (1) Female

____ (2) Male

3. What are your plans after high school?

____ (1) Go to Work

____ (2) Go to Technical or Two-Year College

____ (3) Go to College/University

____ (4) Go into the Military

____ (5) Do Not Know

____ (6) Other _____

This study is funded by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction through the Bureau for Vocational Education and conducted by CVTAE at UW-Stout.